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Accidence of Hebrew Grammar, with Exercises. By HENRY A. COFFEY, S. J., Professor of Hebrew in Woodstock College, Maryland. B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis and London, 1918. vi + 113 pp. \$1.25 net.

In view of the favorable mention which this book received last year at the hands of no less a person than Rev. Samuel B. Mercer, Ph. D., D. D., Professor in the Western Theological Seminary, Chicago, Rector of the Society of Oriental Research, and the author of various books and articles on Oriental subjects, it is necessary to call attention to its true character. In the review referred to, which covers about half a page in the *Journal of the Society of Oriental Research* (Vol. III, No. 1, Mar. 1919, p. 49), the reviewer, before pointing out two mistakes, one omission, one misprint, and making two suggestions for improving the book in minor points, pronounces the following eulogy on the work: "Professor Coffey has compiled a very attractive and most useful little book on Hebrew Grammar, with exercises. The type, both Hebrew and English, is clear and sharp, and the soft white paper is a pleasure to the eye. In his attempt to simplify, and make attractive, the study of Hebrew, the author has rightly omitted all complicated and uncertain matters, and has emphasized the verb, which is the backbone of the language. After every section of grammatical explanation comes an excellently chosen exercise which serves to consolidate and test the student's knowledge step by step. There are very few points to criticize in this excellent little book." It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the reviewer is writing his review without reading the book, for even a cursory examination would have made such statements impossible.

The Grammar proper consists of 61 pp., of which about 25 are devoted to paradigms and exercises, leaving about 35 or 36 for grammatical statements or rules, which it is needless to say are very meager and incomplete. The Grammar is followed by 24 pp. of additional paradigms, 5 pp. of selections for reading, 10 pp. of glossaries, 3 pp. of index.

Note the following typical misprints: p. 7, l. 3 of Ex. שְׁרִיין; p. 23, l. 5 הַקְטִיל for הִקְטִיל; p. 30, l. 2 of Ex. מִצָּח for מִצָּח; p. 32, l. 4 of Ex. הִסְנֶה for הִסְנֶה; p. 44, l. 1 of Ex. שְׁרִיין; p. 58, § 85 עָלִיךְ for עָלִיךְ; p. 59, l. 1 הִחְרַב for הִחְרַב; p. 61, l. 6 רְבוּתִים for רְבוּתִים; p. 93, l. 1 דָּוָר for דָּוָר. Others occur on p. 15, l. 1 of Ex.; p. 29, l. 3; p. 36, l. 2 of Ex. *bis*; p. 37, l. 2 of Ex.; p. 57, ll. 2, 3 of Ex. (5 mistakes); p. 58, § 86 *ter*; p. 61, l. 2; p. 66, last l.; p. 76, l. 9; p. 91, ll. 1, 2

(first selection), ll. 1, 2, 4, 8 (second); p. 92, l. 1; p. 93, ll. 1, 15; p. 94, l. 14; p. 95, ll. 4 *bis*, 6, 7 (last selection); p. 101, No. 63; p. 103, No. 153. Some of these, as for example those on pp. 15, 30, 32, and 58, § 86 may be mistakes and not misprints.

The following are examples of incorrect or inaccurate statement: א (as a vowel letter) = a, e, i, o (p. 2); The sign ׀ is placed under a letter that has no vowel (p. 5); Daghes lene removes the aspiration from (the) begadkepheth (*ibid.*); If it (a syllable) begins with two consonants, the first has vocal shewa (p. 6); It (the construct infinitive) is so called because it is construed with other parts of speech (p. 11); The term of motion (= place whither) (p. 18); Daghes forte is usually omitted in ׀ (p. 39); The first radical נ (of verbs נִפְּלֵי) is dropped or assimilated as the case may require except in 2 pl. pf. kal (p. 39).

There is much that is comparatively innocuous in the grammatical statements, the paradigms, the selections from the Old Testament, the glossaries, etc., but the exercises put the final seal of condemnation on the book. No Hebraist could write such Hebrew, many of the sentences being like those found in the uncorrected exercises of beginners. Here אֵל 'to,' which never occurs in the Bible, is used thruout for אֶל (cf. above); the sign of the accusative is in most cases similarly אֵת instead of the more common אֶת. The article is frequently omitted where it should stand, e. g., p. 19, אֵת רֹאשׁ פְּלִשְׁתִּי (for הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי) 'the head of the Philistine (*acc.*); *ibid.*, אֵל מִדְבָּר (for הַמִּדְבָּר) 'to the desert'; *ibid.*, אֵל בָּאֵשׁ (for בָּאֵשׁ) 'was consumed by fire.' This omission is especially frequent after the accusative sign אֵת. On the other hand אֵת is frequently omitted before the article. So it would seem almost as if the author considered the two interchangeable. He uses the imperfect several times in a past sense as the equivalent of the perfect or imperfect with *waw* conversive, e. g., p. 30, וְהָאֶבֶן הַזֶּה נִסְּבָה 'and the stone sank' (cf. p. 37, l. 1 of Ex.; p. 38, l. 3 of Ex.). He sometimes uses the wrong form of common verbs, e. g., מָהַר for מָהֵר 'hasten,' p. 32, l. 4 of Ex. (cf. צִוָּה for צִוָּה 'order' p. 42, last l.). Sometimes an unusual word which occurs in the Old Testament a few times with a certain meaning in a certain connection, is used freely in that meaning in any connection. For example, סִגָּר (only סִגָּר occurs in O. T.) which with a single exception

occurs always with *בִּיר* 'to deliver into the hand of,' is used four times in various forms on p. 18 apparently in the sense of 'deliver over' (?) to judge from such sentences in the accompanying English exercise as "David delivered over a man of battle" (cf. also the meaning "deliver" given for the Piel of *סגר* in the vocabulary, p. 103). Moreover the Qal *סגר* which means 'to close' and not to 'deliver into the hand of,' is used in this latter sense on p. 26, viz., *לֹא יִסְגֵּר בִּיר*. Similarly *נִסָּה* which regularly means 'to try, prove,' and rarely if ever 'to try, attempt,' is used in this latter sense on p. 44, viz., *נִסָּה לָרֶדֶת* 'try to go down,' and the meaning "try, attempt" is given as the only rendering in the glossary, p. 103.

The peculiar quality of some of the exercises can best be appreciated from the following complete sentences with their conjectural meaning added in parentheses, e. g., *נָתַן שָׂאוֹל אֶת קִיבֵּעַ* (p. 19) (Saul put the helmet on the boy's head); *נִבְחַרָה לְדֹד אֶבֶן מִן הַנַּחַל לְקַלֵּעַ אֲשֶׁר לוֹ בַּצָּאן* (p. 32) (a stone was chosen by David from the brook for the sling which he had with the flock); *לֹא נָתַן לְאֹכֵל* (p. 36) (don't give anything to eat); *קָלַע* (p. 40) (the boy threw the stone and smote the Philistine in the forehead); *נִסָּה לָרֶדֶת וּתְצֵא* (p. 44) (try to go down and bring us out of this place).

The above statement of deficiencies and errors is by no means complete, but it is sufficient to show that the book is worse than useless. It is true that some of the forms, some of the rules, and some of the examples given are not incorrect, but that such a work, bristling as it does with misprints, mistakes, and misstatements, should ever form the basis for a real knowledge of the Hebrew of the Bible, is unthinkable.

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